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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/ELA, EB/IFD/ODF
TREASURY FOR OIA MATHIASSEN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [LE](#) [AE](#)
SUBJECT: PM SINIORA VISIT TO ABU DHABI

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[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: Lebanese Prime Minister Siniora concluded a very positive visit to the UAE on January 16, with a one-on-one meeting with UAE President Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, meetings with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, other UAE officials, and the Lebanese expatriate community. UAEG officials expressed strong public support for the Lebanese government and for reconstruction and development. They stopped short, however, of disclosing potential pledges. End Summary

[1](#)2. (SBU) On January 16, Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora visited Abu Dhabi as part of his regional tour in advance of the January 25 Paris Donors' conference. According to Yousef Al-Otaiba, International Affairs Director for Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (MbZ), Siniora had a very positive visit -- including a one-on one with UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. President Khalifa publicly stressed the UAE's interest in supporting efforts at stabilizing Lebanon and creating a "conducive climate for reconstruction and development." For his part, Siniora thanked the UAE for its support noting that "UAE aid for the underdeveloped areas of Lebanon has enabled us to exert our control and sovereignty in those areas." Siniora also cited Sheikh Khalifa's initiative to clear south Lebanon of mines and cluster munitions and the "solidarity project" to rebuild schools damaged in the war.

[1](#)3. (SBU) MbZ publicly emphasized the UAE's support for the Lebanese government and stated that the UAE was looking forward to the Paris Donors' Conference for Lebanon. He called on all Lebanese parties to work toward reconciliation, stressing that dialogue among the parties was key to the country's stability and security.

[1](#)4. (U) Siniora also met with the UAE's well educated Lebanese expatriate community, explaining that Lebanon "was proud" of its relationship with the UAE which has been "very supportive to us during our most difficult times."

[1](#)5. (SBU) Comment: AbZ and MinState Finance Mohammed Khalfan bin Kharbash will attend the Paris Donors' meeting. MFA's Director of Arab Affairs and the Director of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development will also attend. We believe that the UAE will measure the level of its contribution based on the contributions of other GCC members. End Comment.
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